

FE Week



FREE WITH THIS ISSUE



Teacher Alison Bethune (centre) with performing arts students from Salford City College's sixth form centre.
Inset: Alison in the video for You Don't Know

Teacher Alison on right track

A Greater Manchester performing arts teacher has landed a record deal through a song that has been played on BBC Radio 1.

Alison Bethune, from Salford City College's sixth form centre, in Eccles, and Manchester band the Beat Corporation were signed by London-based Champion Records after impressing with their self-released single You Don't Know.

The dance track has already been played on Radio 1, Capital FM and Kiss FM and they have filmed a promotional video for MTV.

Alison said: "It's all been a bit of a whirlwind. I still can't quite believe it, even though we have signed a contract."

Visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqJ7ma4hlHc to watch the video.

BOSSSES FACE APPRENTICE BILL OF UP TO £9K

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Providers could receive up to £27,000 for every apprentice they train — but £9,000 of that cash would have to come from employers and the rest from the Skills Funding Agency, *FE Week* can reveal.

And further public money, including extra cash for 16 to 18-year-old apprenticeships, could push the figure providers receive up to £37,800.

The figures are for a pilot employer-led funding model in which government pays 67 per cent and employers 33 per cent. They were released to *FE Week* by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and are for the first Trailblazers' group. They come in five funding bands ranging from £3,000 to

Apprenticeship pilot funding table

Source: BIS

Maximum funding bands	Employer pays	Government pays	Provider earns
1	£9,000	£18,000	£27,000
2	£4,000	£8,000	£12,000
3	£3,000	£6,000	£9,000
4	£1,500	£3,000	£4,500
5	£1,000	£2,000	£3,000

£27,000. However, the government has said it wants employers to shop around so that they might lower their own — and therefore the taxpayers' — actual contribution.

It is believed to be the first time a mandatory cash contribution will have been required from apprentice employers. It comes two years after a review of apprenticeships by former BBC Dragons' Den investor Doug Richard recommended an employer-led system.

The government has not revealed how it will pay its share with the results of the latest consultation, which ended on May 1, proposing a PAYE or credit account system yet to be published.

Association of Employment and Learning Providers chief executive Stewart Segal said: "The proposals include the principle of mandatory cash contributions which we know will be a barrier for some."

He added: "The process of monitoring employer contributions will be an important part of the pilot. We will need to carefully monitor the impact of the pilot although the Trailblazers may not be typical of the majority of apprenticeships."

A BIS spokesperson said: "We will also provide additional incentives for completion [10 per cent], for small businesses [10 per cent and defined as fewer than 50 staff] and for apprentices aged 16 to 18 [20 per cent]. This is a simple, fair system that will support employers to sit in the driving seat of the apprenticeships system in future."

English and maths funding for apprenticeships, worth up to £1,000 per learner, would be in addition to these figures and would come entirely from the government.

Further coverage on **page 8**

**ESOL DELAYS
REACTION**



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**EX-BARNFIELD BOSS
SPEAKS OUT**



PAGES 6 & 7

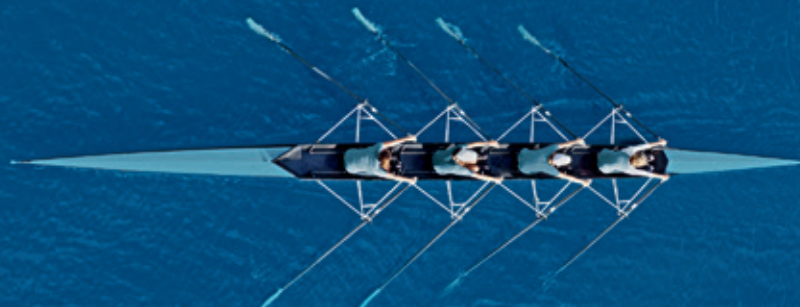
**CHARTERED STATUS:
A POLITICAL FOOTBALL?**

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Let's Pull Together

Because together, we achieve more

See back page for more information.



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NEWS

OFSTED BRINGS INSPECTIONS IN-HOUSE

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Ofsted inspections of FE and skills providers and schools will no longer be carried out by private contractors from the next academic year.

The education watchdog said it would not be renewing contracts with inspection service providers (ISPs), which are set to expire in August next year.

The current contracts, with CfBT, Serco and Tribal, have run since September 2009.

Ofsted said additional inspectors (AIs), who are currently contracted through ISPs for inspections on behalf of Ofsted, would continue to form a “significant part of the inspection work force”.

From September next year, AIs will be contracted directly by Ofsted, giving it more direct control over their selection, training and quality assurance, it claimed.

The move follows, *FE Week* understands, concerns that inspectors have not been following Ofsted guidance, such as being told not to grade individual lesson observations.

Joy Mercer, director of policy at the Association of Colleges (AoC), said: “We welcome the decision to end the outsourcing of inspection... and take the responsibility in-house. We hope that this will lead to consistency across inspections.”

The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) supported



Two providers keep EFA contracts despite grade 4s

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Two out of eight providers hit with an Ofsted grade four rating since February last year have been allowed to keep their Education Funding Agency (EFA) contracts, the Department for Education (DfE) has revealed.

It said the two that kept their contracts were given a chance to work with civil servants to improve performance.

The six other grade four organisations — five independent learning providers (ILPs) and one local authority — had their EFA contracts terminated, said the DfE.

But Gloucestershire-based independent specialist college Ruskin Mill kept its contract, as did adult and community learning provider Nacro.

Nacro has 2,655 learners and a current EFA allocation of £8.578m. The London-based national charity was given a grade four rating February last year and had previously been grade three.

Principal Josh Coleman said: “Working with government agencies and local authorities over this last year has given Nacro the opportunity to improve its

Ofsted having “more direct control over the selection, training and quality assurance of inspectors and inspection teams”.

Learning improvement consultant Phil Hatton (pictured), who was an Ofsted inspector from 1998 until January last year, told *FE Week*: “Hopefully the changes will lead to more consistency with inspections and improved training of inspectors.”

But a spokesperson for the Association of Employment and Learning Providers said while it had received regular complaints until 2013 about inconsistencies with inspections of independent learning providers, it had received “far fewer” in the last 12 months.

He raised concern about losing “the experience and knowledge of the inspectors that work through the external organisations”.

Ofsted declined to comment on the consistency of its current inspection regime.

But its director of corporate services Nick Jackson said: “For the last five years our ISPs have delivered a successful and professional inspection programme for Ofsted.

“With the conclusion of these contracts the time was right to look again at how Ofsted can best deliver a service that is efficient and flexible.”

Ofsted’s existing contractual arrangements for the delivery of early years’ inspections will continue.

education provision by getting back to basics and focusing on the individual learners’ experiences.”

It is believed Nacro has been visited by Ofsted again recently and is expecting a more favourable grading soon.

Ruskin Mill has 110 learners and a current EFA allocation of £1.188m. It was rated as inadequate by Ofsted after a visit in March, having previously been deemed outstanding following an inspection in 2011.

The college, which recently demoted its principal Elisabeth Johnson to deputy and drafted in new executive principal Oliver Cheney, declined to comment.

The news has led to a call from the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) for a review system that might allow ILPS graded as inadequate to also hold onto EFA contracts while working towards improvement.

Paul Warner (pictured), director of employment and skills for the AELP, said: “No such review system exists for ILPs,



FE WEEK NEWS IN BRIEF

Loans top 66,000

The number of FE loan applications for April was 1,940 — bringing the total since the scheme launched from April last year to 66,289.

The latest figures, published on Thursday (May 29), show the most applications in April (2014) was 1,339 for level three diplomas, which also had the most applications from the start of 24+ advanced learning loans with 32,466.

The lowest number for the month was nine for A-levels, and the lowest from start was 349 for level four certificates.

Apprentice Bill hope

A bid to re-introduce the Young Apprenticeship Programme may be restarted in the autumn.

Conservative MP Dominic Raab’s Bill for the 14 to 16-year-old scheme had its first reading in the House of Commons last September.

There had been hopes it would be back before MPs last month, but it failed to get a second reading before the end of the last Parliamentary sitting.

A spokesperson for Mr Raab said he hoped to re-introduce the bill in the next Parliament.

Disability toolkit

A new toolkit to help employers support disabled apprentices has been released.

Developed by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, the employer toolkit aims to demonstrate “simple and cost-effective” actions to make programmes open to disabled apprentices.

The toolkit was developed in partnership with employers, including Barclays, Tottenham Hotspur FC and the National Theatre.

Visit to view toolkit employer-toolkit.org.uk

who normally suffer an automatic loss of contract without the chance of review or remediation.

“This variance in approach remains iniquitous and the AELP will continue to be lobbying for a more equitable system to be devised and implemented.”

A DfE spokesperson said: “We consider each case on its merits and have been working with Nacro and Ruskin Mill after they were given inadequate ratings by Ofsted in an effort to drive up standards.

“Where appropriate we will terminate contracts with commercial and charitable education providers. Six organisations had their agreements terminated in 2013-14.

“When deciding whether to terminate contracts we take into account criteria such as the best interests of learners, strategic importance of provision, availability of replacement provision, and capacity to improve in making judgments about whether to terminate.”

When former Conservative Education

NEWS

Esol hold-up welcomed amid new qual concerns

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The extension of existing funding rules and postponement of new qualifications for English for Speakers of Other Languages (Esol) courses does not go far enough to help providers manage impending changes, it has been claimed.

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) has revealed that funding rates for Skills for Life (SfL) Esol courses in 2014/15 will remain the same as in the current academic year, and that the introduction of new qualifications, due in August, will be postponed until January.

But the National Association for Teaching English and other Community Languages to Adults (NATECLA) warned the postponement would still not give providers enough time to prepare for the change.

Its co-chair, Diana Tremayne, told *FE Week*: “We welcome the extension of current qualifications and funding rates, with class codes for those who need extended periods of learning, as our members have been reporting rising concern about programme planning, hours and funding for next academic year from August 1.

“However, in order for providers with a variety of long and short programmes and learners who take different units

at different times to plan and offer a coherent programme next year we would ask for a year-long extension of existing arrangements.

“It’s really difficult for us to model our funding, plan provision, train teachers in new qualifications, decide which awarding organisations to use and make a massive change one third of the way through the year.”

She said NATECLA members had worked with awarding organisations, the Association of Colleges, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the SFA and had asked for another year.

Pamela Baxter, assistant director at Cambridge English Language Assessment, which is an arm of awarding organisation OCR, said: “We welcome the continuity for colleges as September is very close and changing arrangements now would make it difficult for them to plan.

“However, ultimately we would like to see long term stable plans in place for the Esol sector in the UK. To this end, we are working with Demos to undertake research to inform a coherent strategy for Esol in the UK and expect to see the report launched this summer.”

In a guidance document, the SFA said: “In February 2013 we set out the principles to shape the future suite of new SfL Esol qualifications. Since that time awarding



Diana Tremayne

organisations have been developing a number of new Esol SfL qualifications and some of these have been submitted to Ofqual for accreditation.

“To enable providers to complete their planning for 2014 to 2015 and to ensure there is time to prepare for the delivery of the new qualifications we have agreed with BIS and Ofqual to put in place interim arrangements



Pamela Baxter

to continue funding the existing Esol adult basic certificates and ‘units’ for a further period up to December 31, 2014.

“In 2014 to 2015 existing ESOL adult basic certificates will be funded at the same published rates as 2013 to 2014. These were based on historical national delivery patterns and awarding organisation recommended guided learning hours.”

Scores of colleges ‘interested’ in career college opportunities

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More than 40 colleges have expressed an interest in opening a Career College since proposals for the new form of 14 to 19 education institutions were put forward in October, *FE Week* can reveal.

Career Colleges Trust chief executive Ruth Gilbert (pictured) said she had been approached by colleges and also employers about setting up the specialist vocational education colleges.

Ms Gilbert said: “We have had more than 60 individual enquiries from organisations interested in opening Career Colleges — two thirds instigated by FE colleges, and many by employers.”

She declined to say who she had been approached by, but the list of those due to open in time for September is expected to be announced by the trust on June 9.

“They have to meet the standards we’ve set out in terms of engagement with employers and clear, employer-led career pathways,” said Ms Gilbert.

“As well as speaking to Ofsted, we’re also looking at local demand and the facilities the college has available.

“At the end of the day we won’t compromise on quality and we would rather delay to get the right college than open where it’s not.”

When former Conservative Education



Secretary Lord Baker proposed Career Colleges in October, general FE colleges in Oldham, Bromley, Oxford and Lambeth expressed an interest.

Oldham College may postpone the opening its proposed creative industries Career College as its £9m purpose-built centre may not be ready for September, but a spokesperson said the college was “working closely” with the trust.

Ms Gilbert said the trust would “not accept students being housed in temporary accommodation”.

Lambeth College’s grade three Ofsted rating has scuppered its plans as currently only one or two-rated colleges can recruit students from 14, but a spokesperson said the college was “still keen” and was “on course for a good inspection in the autumn”.

Bromley College director of corporate development Lynn Barratt confirmed the college hoped to open a food, hospitality and enterprise centre for this September while City of Oxford College confirmed it was delaying its construction Career College until September next year.

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Principal vows to protect learners from strike

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The principal of Lambeth College has vowed to protect learners from an indefinite strike planned this week — but conceded industrial action during exams season was “particularly disruptive”.

Mark Silverman said he would not let the college’s 15,000 learners be affected by the University College Union (UCU) demonstration and that “most classes” would still run.

Union members voted to walk out from Tuesday (June 3) and not return to classrooms until a row over new staff contracts was resolved.

It is understood that a key sticking point is the number of days’ annual leave dropping from 60 to 50.

But Mr Silverman challenged the UCU to return to the negotiating table in a last ditch attempt to avoid unrest.

“It’s particularly disruptive at such a crucial time and an important time of the year,” he told *FE Week*.

“I think it’s irresponsible to take action at a time which is so crucial to them.”

The ballot for strike action was supported by 89 per cent of voters —with turnout at 72 per cent.

The UCU was unable to provide the actual numbers behind the percentages, but according to Mr Silverman 115 staff

members had voted for strike action.

“We have about 300 teaching staff, and most of them will continue as normal and most classes will run,” he said.

A UCU spokesperson said the new contracts would leave all new staff starting from April 1, 2014, with “bigger workloads, but less sick pay and fewer holidays” and “working longer hours than all but three of London’s 38 FE colleges”.

However, Mr Silverman said leave entitlement remained above sector norms.

“New staff will still have 50 days annual leave, including public holidays,” he said.

“The sector average is 48, many only have 35.”

Current teachers have 60 days’ annual leave, including public holidays, with 23 hours of contact time with students, which for new staff would rise by an hour, bringing the total working week from 35 hours to 36, he said.

“This is very much in line with what is normal in colleges,” said Mr Silverman.

Mr Silverman, who came to the college two years ago after it was hit with an Ofsted grade four inspection result, said the new contracts were necessary.

“This is a college with a notice of concern around its finances. It’s got to change and be efficient and fit for purpose,” he said.

He added: “We are keen to resolve this — I have always said our door is open for discussions.”



Mark Silverman, principal of Lambeth College

Una O’Brien, UCU regional official, said: “UCU members... have made it crystal clear that they will stay out for as long as it takes.

“The college has so far used every trick in the book to try and block strike action.

“It would have been better off using the time and resources to try and resolve the dispute.”

The last indefinite strike at a college was in 2009 when Tower Hamlets College staff walked out over job losses and cuts to English language programmes.

The strike lasted almost a month before the college backed down.

Pressure from AELP with new manifesto

Retention of functional skills, tackling youth unemployment and more coherent procurement across government departments are among the priorities for the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) for the next year.

The AELP manifesto, due to be unveiled today (Monday, June 2) on the first day of its two-day annual conference in London, takes stock of priorities and focuses on others in the run-up to next year’s general election.

The manifesto says: “We will continue to lobby for the retention of Functional Skills until the ‘new’ GCSEs are proven to provide the functional skills required and to be delivered flexibly and on demand.”

It adds: “The 1m unemployed young people must have access to the highest quality support including real work experience with real employers and success should be measured by getting them into sustainable employment.

“There are many programmes to support unemployed young people including traineeships and the youth contract. AELP will continue to push for more flexibility in delivery and more integration of programmes.”

The manifesto also repeats the AELP’s claim that the government should fund basic employability skills and competencies up to level two, regardless of age.

See page 12 for expert pieces from speakers at the AELP conference



Notice of tender



Two Way Street Development Programme

Publication Date: 22/05/2014
Deadline Date: 20/06/2014
Deadline Time: 12:00

Abstract: This employer/provider strategic partnership development programme is an important initiative by the Foundation with and for the VET system: employers, VET providers and other partners. It is being commissioned by the Foundation in partnership with the UKCES and has been informed by views and evidence from providers, sector bodies, employers and employer organisations and other interested parties.

The programme is intended to promote a step change in the culture of the VET system in England, principally through the development of local and sectoral strategic partnerships between employers, VET providers and others. It embraces independent training providers and community learning providers as well as colleges.

The development programme will be an important response to two key documents: the Commission on Adult Vocational Teaching and Learning report and the recent discussion paper, A New Conversation – Employer and College Engagement. The Foundation is looking to appoint a development partner or partners with the expertise to plan, organise, facilitate and disseminate three distinct but connected components of the development programme:

- (1) nine local Leadership Exchanges between employers, VET providers and others;
- (2) three national Strategic Sector Dialogues between key stakeholders in the VET system; and
- (3) action research to capture, stimulate, support and disseminate examples of innovative and effective practice, extending beyond the other two components, and to develop a proposed national framework

This ‘two-way street’ development programme is primarily about creating and/or developing genuinely strategic partnerships between employers and providers from across the education and training sector, and involving others such as Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and professional bodies. This will be part of a broader goal, shared by the Foundation, the UKCES and partners to engender cultural change across the whole VET system.

Hosting, support and maintenance of the Foundation Online Learning Environment

Deadline Date: 13/06/2014
Deadline Time: 12:00

Abstract: The Foundation is looking for a supplier with significant experience of hosting moodle sites to provide a high-quality, seamless hosting and support service for the Foundation that incorporates three essential elements:

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- end-user and administrator support
- technical support and maintenance

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If hosting is outsourced to a third party it is expected that the supplier will be point of contact for the Foundation and the supplier will liaise with the hosts.

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Ex-Barnfield boss talks ghost learners, financial probes and the Audi pay-off



In June 2007, Peter Birkett joined Barnfield College as principal. But six years later, having been knighted for “services to education” and with the college boasting an apparently successful federation of four primary and six secondary school academies, Sir Peter left having become director-general of the Barnfield Federation.

Within months serious questions were being asked about federation finances. In a frank interview with FE Week reporter Rebecca Cooney, Sir Peter talks about his Barnfield experience.

“We changed the world — the country’s FE and skills programme,” says Sir Peter Birkett. “We were the first college to sponsor an academy, now there are 45 other colleges doing it.”

But his comments about Barnfield College are in light of investigations into the wider federation by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), allegations of grade massaging, an unexpected Audi and a visit from the FE Commissioner.

They all took place after his resignation late last year, but Sir Peter is nevertheless keen to downplay their significance.

“I wasn’t surprised there were some audits carried out because they always carry out audits when there’s a change of leadership,” he says.

“I was surprised that it was so well-publicised and seen as a negative thing but I wasn’t surprised that audits were carried out.”

However, he does acknowledge that the probes were no ordinary audits and, he says, he was “surprised” by the allegations.

“Every signal in the college was green. All our internal and external audits were showing that everything was, not perfect, but planned-for and known about.

“I was confident when I left that all of those things were in order... there was no grade massaging, which the SFA report said, so I wasn’t surprised when I read that, because I knew that, they said that there was no fraud.”

However, the report did raise questions about the financial rewards given to Sir Peter when he left the college — as departing director general he took a lump sum equivalent to his annual bonus, a further lump sum not in his contract as part of a compromise agreement and his company car, an £30,000 Audi Q5.

According to the SFA and EFA reports, compromise agreements are used to prevent the former employees making claims against their employers after their contract has been terminated.

But both reports questioned why a compromise agreement had been paid out, when Sir Peter himself had resigned.

The SFA report also told how governors

let him keep his company car — which they thought was a three-year-old Jaguar, when it was in fact a newer and “considerably” more expensive Audi.

“Despite the governors being very concerned that the transfer of this much more expensive vehicle was not what they intended, they did not challenge the agreement,” said the report.

However, the funding agencies’ reports also noted that Sir Peter had not asked for the settlement. Instead, they pointed out, he asked for leave not taken over the previous four years.

He may not have asked for the two lump sums (the compromise sum he describes as a “pension top-up”) and the car, but, he tells me, he feels fully justified in accepting them.

“I felt it would have been an insult to the board and I would have looked ungrateful to say, ‘I don’t want it’, when they wanted to give me that for what I’d created, what I’d done and the hard work that I’d put into the organisation,” says Sir Peter.

As for the overstatement of nearly £1m uncovered by auditors KPMG, which led to allegations of ghost learners with guided learning hours failing to match attendance registers, Sir Peter maintains this has been “blown out of proportion”.

“They were real life, proper students — they weren’t ghost students. They were there, but my understanding is there was some error in recording students,” he says.

The problem, he adds, would easily have

Barnfield ‘moves on’ from Sir Peter

A spokesperson for the Barnfield Federation told *FE Week*: “Barnfield has severed all links with Sir Peter Birkett, and we regret that he finds it necessary to discuss the organisation in his retirement. Barnfield has moved on.”

A statement to *FE Week* in October, a federation spokesperson said it had been “engaging with the SFA and the EFA to undertake a review of the federation’s operations at Barnfield College and its sponsored academies.

“The college has significant cash reserves and is financially stable.

“Our students are at the very centre of all we do at Barnfield and our recent restructure was designed to create even better education delivery in the future, reduce our costs and enable us to offer an excellent service to the Luton community.”

They added: “Our focus continues to be on our students, parents and staff.

“They are our priority always; and we are re-shaping Barnfield to ensure that we provide excellent education. That’s

“They were real life, proper students — they weren’t ghost students. They were there, but my understanding is there was some error in recording students

been solved through SFA clawback and EFA re-basing processes which balance out the amount of money given the following year.

“The college had about £5m of subcontractor work and two of them underperformed their targets... when I left they were on target, or so they said, my assumption the money owed through them would be clawed back from the subcontractors,” he adds.

“I think that was just human error, but I have to tell you every year FE colleges have to look at what they’ve delivered and whether they have to pay back or not — and that’s the way it is in the world.”

Normally, he says “those adjustments would have been made and nothing would have been said about that” but due to the investigations, “it became an issue with the media and the press who say ‘million pound pay back, ghosts on the books’”.

“It would be nice in the nicest possible way if that could be brought out, because — I’ll be totally honest with you — it has been a torrid time for me because I’ve known the truth.”

But Sir Peter retired from Barnfield in part, he says, because “I felt that Barnfield needed to change its governance structure and governance arrangements, and for two years I was trying to do that with legal advice and wasn’t able to.”

It’s a view that appears to have had the backing of the FE Commissioner

Dr David Collins who, having visited Barnfield in January, called for at least half the governors to be replaced and for “significant changes” to the federation leadership.

He said found that “the governing body has not provided sufficient oversight of the corporation and the federation as its sponsor, nor has it provided adequate scrutiny and challenge of the executive team.”

The federation appointed Dame Jackie Fisher as its new chief executive the month after Dr Collins’ visit, but Sir Peter is clear about his experience of Barnfield governance.

“The organisation had outgrown the board — the board you need to run a college is not the same as the board you need to run a large organisation like a federation... but getting a decision from them was proving pretty difficult,” he says.

“Some of them weren’t the right people for a board that was dynamic, innovative and entrepreneurial... it’s not their fault it had outgrown them, the issue was they weren’t pushing with me quickly enough to create this new governance structure.”

He adds: “People don’t know about all the things I had to go through to sponsor an academy.

“There were a number of things that I did really quickly — and I say ‘I’ because it was I at the beginning it then became ‘we’ because I didn’t have the time to do it.”



His hope for the college, he tells me, is that “it builds on the results, puts in new structure that’s needed, and continues to improve year-on-year and continues to rebuild the brand which has been slightly tarnished”.

“I just want it to be successful — I created the right foundation so that it was sustainable and continuing to develop. I just want to see Barnfield where it ought to be,” he says.

The college performed well in last year’s success rates — “top FE college in the country in all-length 16 to 18 courses,” Sir Peter tells me (which it is, if you discount South Devon

College on the grounds that it is both a tertiary and FE college).

But does Sir Peter think his own reputation has been tarnished?

“The people who just read the headlines, of course that will be fixed in their mind,” he says.

“But the people in high level positions, who read below the headlines, I think believe that you can always do things different and better but also know there was nothing that was seriously damaging in the reports.

“Have I been damaged? Time will tell.”

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FE WEEK COMMENT

Time to improve reform, not fight it

The details of the government’s first ‘employer-led’ apprenticeship funding pilot are out.

But many will not forget the government ignored the vast majority of responses to the first apprenticeship funding consultation, and it is less than a month since the second consultation ended — before the latest set of results have been shared.

Cynics might therefore point to this announcement being more evidence of not listening to what both employers and the sector have said.

But the Minister is not for turning, and to be fair has made it clear he’s flying the Doug Richard flag.

So let’s move the debate on, and look at the detail.

Providers will now have to secure cash from the employer. A good thing.

But how will the sector cope now with negotiating on price, potentially driving it down — and quality with it?

And how does price negotiation work for employer providers, who are both the customer and the supplier?

Fortunately, unlike apprenticeship loans, this new funding system is being piloted.

So as a sector let’s be solutions-focused, and work with the government to improve the reform during the pilots, and ensure even more employers take on even more apprentices.

Chris Henwood

chris.henwood@feweek.co.uk

TOP IN-HOUSE OFSTED INSPECTION TWEETS

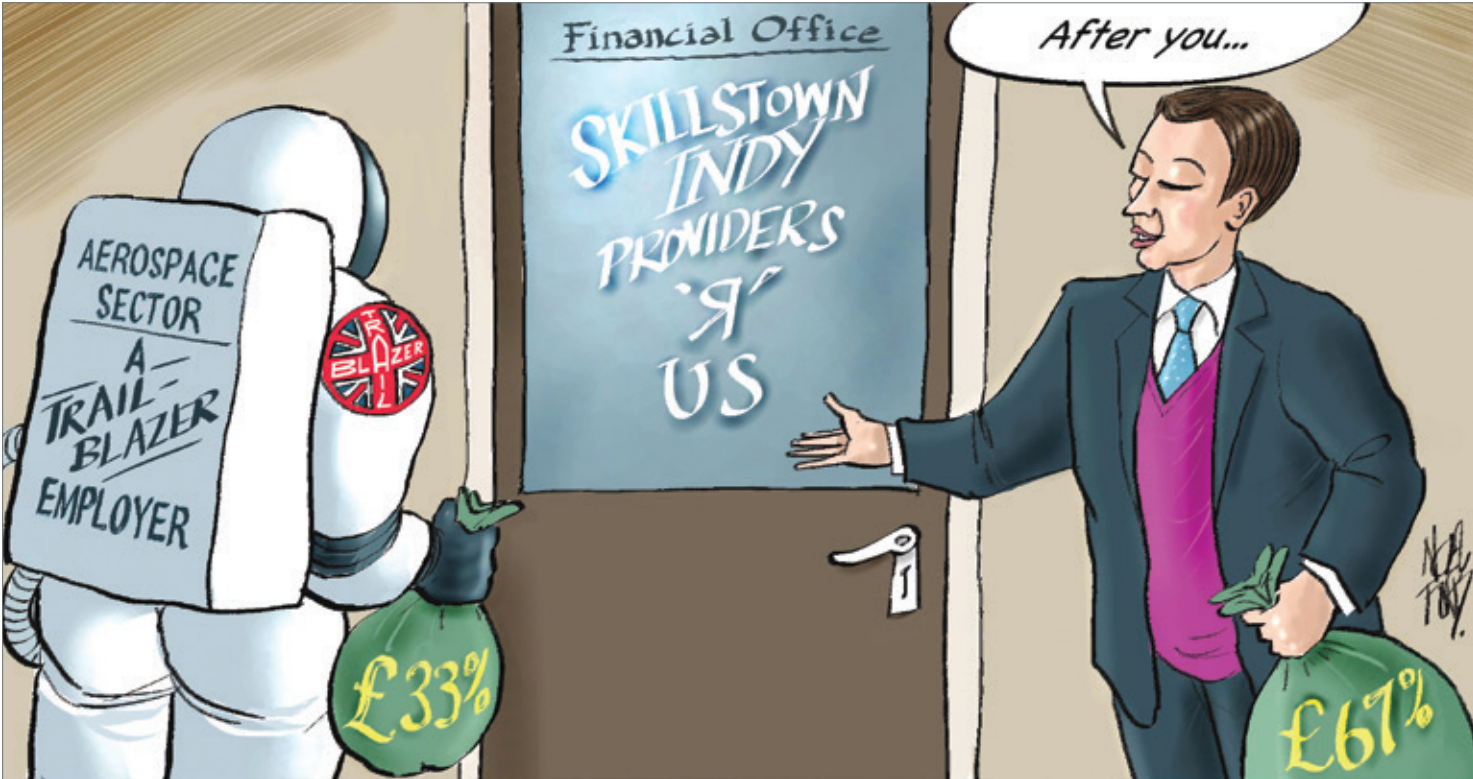
@BarrySheerman
@greenmiranda A long overdue reform !

@Ian_Albert
@BarrySheerman @greenmiranda Contractors managing contracts. Madness! What’s needed now is @Ofstednews to bring all inspections in house.

@DerwynWilliams1
Good news from #Ofsted re:inspections contracting. Well overdue.

@MaryBousteadATL
Ofsted merely importing its quality control problems ‘in house. Ofsted needs radical reform - not tinkering at the edges.

@UKpolicywatch
Ofsted bring inspections in-house to guarantee selection, training and quality assurance; can we extend the idea across public services?



New apprentice funding model ‘no simple system’

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The newly-announced apprenticeship funding system in which employers will contribute 33 per cent of the cash has been described by Association of Employment and Learning Providers chief executive Stewart Segal as “no simple system”.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) had described the employer-led pilot model for the first Trailblazers’ group — made up of employers and professional bodies in eight sectors including aerospace and electrotechnical — as “simple”.

But Mr Segal said its “variables are quite numerous”.

Delivering a webinar on the reforms on Thursday (May 29), he said: “You can summarise it in a clear table, and yes, what we’re moving from is a payment for every individual framework qualification to an overall payment, an averaging payment, but it’s the combination of all those different elements which means it’s still very difficult to know how much you’re going to get for each apprentice.”

He added: “This is no simple system. The variables are quite numerous.”

Meanwhile, other sector groups have welcomed the new system, but conceded the trial run would be a learning curve.

Teresa Frith, senior skills policy manager for the Association of Colleges (AoC), said: “There is currently no cost to employers for 16 to 18-year-olds, but the new government one-off payment shows they recognise that employers may need to invest in additional training for young apprentices.

“It is important to remember that this is a trial and it is difficult to predict how employers will respond at this early stage. We must learn as much as we can from this trial to make sure that when the funding changes are rolled out across the whole range of apprenticeships, they benefit both the employer and the apprentice.”

Employer-led apprenticeship reform has been a key theme of Skills Minister Matthew Hancock’s time in office, and he has previously said he wants it to “become the norm for young people to go into an apprenticeship or go to university or do both

in the case of higher apprenticeships”.

A technical consultation on funding reforms that ended on May 1 attracted more than 1,200 responses.

“The results and next steps will be announced in the autumn,” said a BIS spokesperson.

John Allan, Federation of Small Businesses national chairman, said: “We welcome the move to create an apprenticeship system that puts employers in the driving seat. However, as BIS research has found, there is a risk that setting the employers’ contribution too high will put some businesses off hiring an apprentice.

“A reformed apprenticeship system should be simple, easy to navigate and the phasing of payments and grants must be designed in a way that does not harm cash flow.

“While we welcome the proposed additional grant for small businesses, getting the design of the system right is crucial and it must avoid unnecessary administrative burdens.

“This is critical to maintaining and, hopefully, increasing the number of small firms that take on apprentices.”

Employers to fork out for a third of apprenticeship training

This will cut apprenticeships for SMEs. They just won’t bother. What is this government thinking of? Some SMEs don’t take £1,000 a week and so could never pay a third of the cost of an apprenticeship. At the present time an employer will take on apprentice, train them and start them off on a career. Now this will all go. [I] can’t believe it.

L Thomas

Providers in dark about job status of learners

We are coming towards the end of the

Comments

NEWS

Party politics worry over new quality mark

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PAUL.OFFORD@FEWEEK.CO.UK

While there was widespread support for the quality mark — there were fears it might be subject to the changing make-up of successive governments, or suffer the same fate as similar schemes from the past.

John Hyde, chairman of West Sussex-based HIT Training, said: “Chartered status will succeed if it survives a decade and any changes of political parties and ministers. We have seen several previous schemes in the FE sector which have all withered on the vine.

“Before providers invest in both time and money... they need reassurance from the

Richard Atkins, principal of Exeter College and president-elect of the Association of Colleges, said:

“I believe all colleges judged good or outstanding by Ofsted, and with sound financial health, should be eligible to apply for chartered status. If a college subsequently falls below this benchmark, then it would lose it.”

Matt Atkinson, principal of City of Bath College, said:

“If this is an investment colleges need to be able to see the return on the investment. Most colleges already have strong reputations and relationships in their local communities.”

Mark Brickley, principal of Kensington and Chelsea College, said:

“It is important to scrutinise the process by which chartered status is [going to be] acquired.”

Katy Edwards, managing director of Reading-based ILP Chiltern Training, said:

“The chartered status scheme needs to be carefully introduced so it is achievable to all the diverse FE providers in order for it to have real meaning and value to the sector.”

Verity Hancock, principal of Leicester College, said:

“We think there is value in having a protected title for colleges although it will remain to be seen whether all colleges see the value.”

Mike Hopkins, principal of South & City College Birmingham, said:

“As a college, achieving and retaining chartered status would raise our profile and provide an accepted benchmark for excellence which would assist in student recruitment locally, and from overseas.”

John Hyde, chairman of West Sussex-based HIT Training, said:

“If chartered status is to be credible, it needs a vigorous assessment process to include a detailed submission from the provider and on-site interviews with a percentage of provider’s staff, employer clients and learners.”

Sohail Oosman, head of quality at Hounslow-based ILP Redwood Education and Skills Ltd, said:

“I believe that this is a good idea and would be a kite mark for high quality providers that deserve recognition.”

Richard Weston, strategy manager for Manchester-based ILP Mantra Learning, said:

“Potentially, this is one way of addressing a traditional English problem — raising the status of vocational teaching and learning.”

policy-makers and political parties that it is a long term proposition.”

And Verity Hancock, principal of Leicester College, said: “Colleges are bound to be sceptical about the value of another quality mark for which they are being asked to pay.

“The Training Quality Standard (TQS) was badged as the mark that colleges would need.

“However, it was not understood by employers for whom it was intended to be an indicator, was very expensive and has now sunk without trace.”

Matt Atkinson, principal of City of Bath College, warned against chartered status going “down the same route as the TQS” which was introduced in 2008.

But Richard Weston, strategy manager for Manchester-based ILP Mantra Learning, hoped it would be more successful than previous markers, as “this time the initiative is being driven by the sector for the benefit of the employers and learners”.

The IFE chair, Lord Lingfield, confirmed in March that representatives from a “small group” of providers, who have not been identified, had been chosen to “refine” plans developed by the institute.

And it is understood representatives from the chosen colleges and ILPs will hold talks on chartered status on Wednesday (June 4).

Among the issues likely to be up for discussion is the qualifying criteria for chartered status, and the results of the *FE Week* survey indicated general agreement that Ofsted inspection results should play a key role.

Mike Hopkins, principal of South & City College Birmingham, said qualification should also recognise providers’ financial health, leadership, responsiveness to business needs, and student and employer satisfaction.

Most respondents agreed there should be a charge for the marker, to cover assessment and administrations costs.

Sohail Oosman, head of quality at Hounslow-based ILP Redwood Education and Skills Ltd, thought providers granted chartered status should pay a £300 annual fee.

However, Mr Hyde rejected yearly payments, but said: “Initial assessment fees will probably need to be around £10,000, depending on the size of the company... with a further fee each time chartered status is re-assessed, say every three years.”



There were mixed views on whether chartered status should just improve providers’ reputations, or entail other benefits such as increased access to funding, while Katy Edwards, managing director of Reading-based ILP Chiltern Training, warned against chartered status being “geared towards colleges and not ILPs”.

A spokesperson for BIS(Department for Business Innovation & Skills declined to comment, but the IFE said: “We are still discussing with the sector, including of course those who are particularly interested in becoming members, matters such as the details of how the institution might operate, and possible admission criteria. We are always keen to hear the views of interested parties.”

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Visit feweek.co.uk to read more of their views on chartered status

PROFILE



“My intention was to stay a year and get some experience... 14 years later you can see I never found a trapdoor

SEN’S NATIONAL STAR

@FCWDHITTAKER
FREDDIE.WHITTAKER@FEWEEK.CO.UK

Looking out onto the beautiful rolling hills of the Cotswolds, it’s hard to imagine a greater draw to working at the National Star College.

But after a career dedicated almost exclusively to the education of young people with special educational needs, it is clear that the natural beauty of the college’s Gloucestershire setting came second in the mind of Kathryn Rudd when as she said ‘yes’ to a job at this unique institution.

Rudd, aged 42, has headed the specialist further education college, which provides training and personal development for young people with complex physical disabilities, for four years and is also chair of the Association of National Specialist Colleges (NATSPEC).

Her passion and enthusiasm for specialist education is obvious from the start of our conversation.

She tells me that once she started working with young people who needed extra support, initially at Park Lane general FE college in Leeds, she never looked back.

“I could see the opportunities for these young people,” she says, “and in many of the places that I have worked, the opportunities weren’t there for them — it was just too painful not to work with that group of young people because there was so much progress they could make and so many opportunities for them, and yet they weren’t getting it.

“Young people with disabilities usually came in by a separate entrance in the college, and they were taught in a separate annexe, and they had separate breaks. This was the 1990s”

“And yet, at that time, young people with disabilities usually came in by a separate entrance in the college, and they were taught in a separate annexe, and they had separate breaks. This was the 1990s, and I always remember being told by somebody, ‘could you go and get one of your students?’

“This is what really annoys me about the whole ‘everybody must be included’ — well actually, those young people were, allegedly, included. But there was no inclusion — in reality, they were a segregated part of an FE college.”

An only child born in Coventry in 1971, Rudd enjoyed being part of her community and loved reading. When she was 11, her family moved to Kenilworth, where she went to a “posh” comprehensive. She described the whole experience as a “culture change”.

“It was actually my first understanding about how young people who find it difficult at school got taught,” she says.

“Because one of the things we hadn’t done at my previous school was French, and all the kids in my new school had been learning French for years, so of course I went in, and instead of being in the top set, which I was fairly used to, I was in the bottom set.

“We were supposed to be doing French, but actually all we did was colour in triangles. I thought, ‘this is just dire’, and that’s driven me since that point, that if you don’t fit into that norm, if you don’t fit into the right place in school, you don’t get the right provision for you because people say you’re either in that box or we’re not actually going to bother with you.”

Rudd, who was awarded the OBE in April for services to FE for young adults with learning difficulties, studied English literature at the University of Leeds, hoping to become a journalist. But the closest she

It’s a personal thing

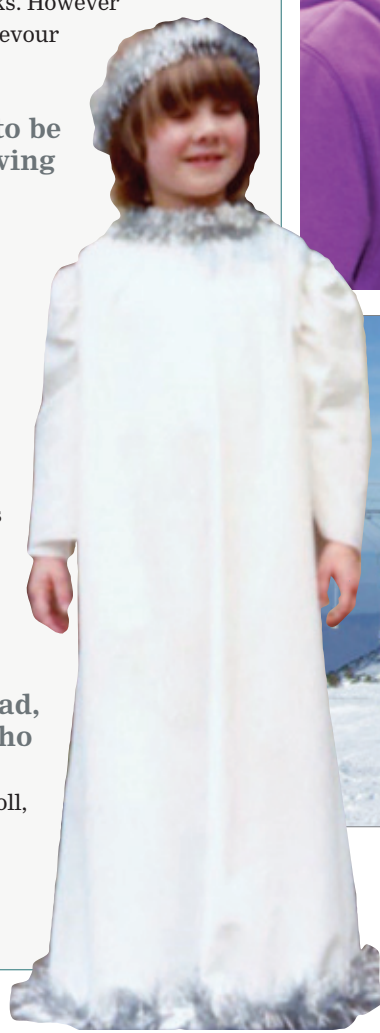
What is your favourite book?
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time by Mark Haddon. I love writers who challenge your norms, who can show you the world in a different way. To the Lighthouse by Virginia Woolf is another one of those books. However I am a voracious reader. I devour thrillers at speed

What did you want to be when you were growing up?
A journalist

What is your pet hate?
The benefits system. It focuses on what you can do rather than what you can’t

What do you do to switch off from work?
I read a lot, I see my friends and I always have a new hobby on the go. Jive dancing at the moment

If you could invite anyone, living or dead, to a dinner party, who would it be?
Sandi Toksvig, Kirsty McColl, Elvis Costello, Idris Elba, Eddie Izzard and Michael Caines



Kathryn, aged 6, dressed as an angel



Kathryn Rudd with students Jasper Farrow-Jones Cumming, aged 20, and Katie Derham, 20



Kathryn skiing in Bulgaria



Kathryn with her OBE

came to life in a newsroom was a job selling media space in the Yorkshire Post. Her move into the world of education happened, she says, by accident, with a job at what was then Park Lane College.

“It was wonderful,” she says. “I worked with young people with learning difficulties initially, and it was just fantastic, seeing the skills of the tutors there in terms of enabling them to progress and how they were achieving, and the value that was placed on them.”

An emerging desire to teach took Rudd back to Leeds University for a Master’s Degree in special educational needs teaching, and she ended up as school links co-ordinator at Park Lane before applying for a job at Warrington Collegiate, a job which presented her with a big challenge — the dreaded driving test.

“I had tried to drive when I was 17 and it was the world’s worst thing, and I hadn’t ever gone back into it, says Rudd. I had a weekend’s worth of driving, passed my test on the Monday morning, and drove the M62 between Leeds and Warrington in the afternoon. I thought, ‘nothing will ever scare you again’.”

In 2000, after five years in Warrington, Rudd saw an advert for an “interesting” job at National Star College, in Ullenwood, near Cheltenham. But she thought her chances were limited when she arrived late for her first appointment.

“I was three quarters of an hour late for my interview here because I got myself hopelessly lost,” she admits. “This was so far south for me that I needed a passport. I had no idea of where it was. I ended up in Oxford, rang my dad and said, ‘where is Cheltenham in relation to Oxford?’ He said, ‘get driving, fast’.

“I remember coming in, and it’s always the way, isn’t it, when you think you’ve blown an interview, and you get quite blasé, and it’s all right, and the interview went fine.

“They didn’t offer me the job I went for, they offered me another job running the therapy teams and supporting the therapy teams, and looking at funding and recruitment. And my intention was to stay a year and get some experience — so 14 years later, you can see I never found a trapdoor.”

In her 14 years at the college, Rudd has held “every post with principal in it” and eventually rose to the top job in 2010. She has chaired NATSPEC for two years and the insight she has gained as part of the organisation seems to have created a fair number of misgivings about policy, and in particular, the “postcode lottery” for learners with special educational needs.

She says: “Because the funding has been devolved to local

authorities, we work with 56 different local authorities, so it’s an absolute postcode lottery.

“Because what one local authority is doing is totally different to another one, so depending on where you sit depends on what provision you get, and I don’t believe that that’s fundamentally right. I think that it is destroying, as I said before, the choice and aspiration of young people.

“I think there is a huge lack of independent information, advice and guidance, which is having a really detrimental effect across the sector, and I think that young people’s options are being limited by the agenda of ‘you can only go to your local college’, whether it meets your needs — or ‘whether it can achieve your aspirations’ is probably the

better terminology — but that is a very real issue.”

But life in Cheltenham is good for Rudd. “I live near the racecourse,” she says. “I have an ever-suffering partner called Mark and a very miserable Collie called Tilly in my life. She has the typical Collie look — ‘They beat me and lock me in rooms when you’re not here’. She does that a lot.”

But she’s hoping to put smiles on faces having agreed to take part in a Strictly Come Dancing-style competition aimed at raising money for the National Star charity.

“This is a whole new area of comfort and pain for me,” she says. “We have been paired with our unfortunate partners, and we have got until September 20 to learn how to jive, jitter and lindy hop.”

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AELP CONFERENCE EXPERTS

The annual conference of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers takes place today (Monday, June 2) and tomorrow at Hammersmith’s Novotel London West. Among the scheduled speakers on day one is Employment Minister Esther McVey, and on day two is Shadow Skills Minister Liam Byrne.



ESTHER MCVEY
MP for Wirral West and Employment Minister

With the economy growing, the number of people in a job rose 283,000 in just the last three months – that’s the largest quarterly rise since records began in 1971.

This means there are a record 30.43m people now in work and the unemployment rate has fallen again to a new five-year low.

Youth unemployment, excluding those in full-time education, is also now at its lowest level since 2008.

We are also seeing business confidence growing, with employers up and down the country hiring again, and who tell us there are jobs out there.

Each and every person who has made a new start or hired someone new is helping make Britain a more prosperous and confident place to be — and as Employment Minister I am committed to making sure everyone has the opportunity to share in the recovery.

With vacancies growing we need to ensure people have the skills and experience that employers are looking for as they expand and take on more staff.

“We have hugely increased the amount of work experience and employer-led work academies

That is why through our network of Jobcentres we have already made more than half a million referrals for training.

Using the expertise of colleges and other private providers we are helping people with things like basic skills and occupational training to ensure they get the skills they need to compete in today’s job market.

And almost 150,000 of those referrals were for young people, which is a major priority of mine.

Only through working together — Jobcentres, employers, local authorities, charities, colleges and independent learning

providers — will we continue to equip young people to successfully move from education into the world of work.

That is why we have hugely increased the amount of work experience and employer-led work academies available to ensure young people have the right skills for modern workplaces.

We have also been working closely with my colleagues in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to introduce traineeships to help young people aged 16 to 23 develop the skills and vital experience they need to secure apprenticeships and other sustainable jobs.

More than 500 training organisations have indicated that they would deliver traineeships in 2013/14 with many employers already on board.

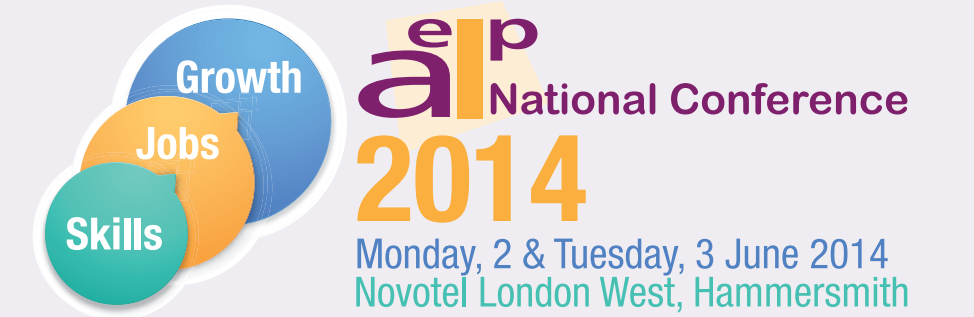
New approaches such as Social Impact Bonds, including the successful Innovation Fund and the upcoming Youth Engagement Fund, provide an innovative new way to engage, among others, charities, communities and business to fund solutions to complex social problems.

The Think Forward programme is one of ten social impact bonds around the country to be funded through the Innovation Fund. Think Forward is delivered by charity Tomorrow’s People who have placed ten highly trained coaches in East London schools where they identify and support 14 to 16-year-olds at risk of becoming not in education, employment or training.

We are also looking at new ways to help young people not in education, employment or training through Jobcentre Plus, in partnership with local authorities.

Our trained work coaches will help young people navigate the wide array of services on offer and tap into local employment and training opportunities. Jobcentre work coaches have a huge amount of expertise, experience and local labour market knowledge, and we want to use that to help young people get their foot in the door to the career they want.

So as the economy continues to grow and businesses continue to take on more staff, we will do everything we can to ensure people — especially young people — are best equipped to take advantage of the recovery.



LIAM BYRNE
MP for Birmingham Hodge Hill and Shadow Skills Minister

The AELP does a remarkable job of bringing together an otherwise disparate group of providers.

It has created unity and delivered joined-up thinking in a sector that’s been battered and broken over the last few years — a sector that has been completely deprived of anything close to a long-term strategy from this government.

At their best, properly resourced and given room for long-term manoeuvre, those represented by the AELP are key to unlocking a bigger, better skilled economy, where the jobs are well paid and inequality is down.

How is this so? It’s simple. A successful economy requires a number of things, but above all else, it needs clear pathways to high level skills and for any skills gaps to be addressed.

The latter poses a serious problem for our nation — between 2011 and 2013, the number of job vacancies without qualified applicants in Britain rose from 91,000 to 146,000.

To address this, we must do two things. First off, it’s imperative that we encourage investment in training by employers, especially given the fact that such spending has fallen by £2.4bn since 2011.

According to the Social Market Foundation, in-work training that leads to a nationally recognized qualification gives a 10 per cent earning premium to employees, coupled with increased productivity and a reduced demand on tax credits.

Secondly, we need to transform the numbers embarking on a vocational path to higher level skills.

The last Labour government’s target of getting 50 per cent of young people into university was right and good, but now it’s time to focus on those who do not go to university — those who may not be academic in nature and who have been failed by a regressive Tory education policy.

These are the people who need apprenticeships, traineeships and opportunities to up-skill themselves in existing employment. It is not, however, simply about churning people through the system — the provision on offer has to be of the highest standard.

Let’s take apprenticeships for example. Under the Tories, apprenticeship starts have grown exponentially. We’ve seen the numbers rise from 457,200 in 2010/11 to 510,200 in

2013/14. On an Excel spreadsheet, these figures look delightful and the team at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills may well feel they have reason to celebrate.

Not quite.
Lift the lid, and you’ll find that of the

“Apprenticeships are often stuck in a rut and this exacerbates the harmful public perception that they’re a poor cousin to university degrees

510,200 apprenticeship starts last year, just 9,800 of these were higher apprenticeships, ie those which lead to a level five or above qualification. That means a mere 1.92 per cent of those starting apprenticeships last year could reach anything near a degree-level qualification through their current training.

Learners are being failed by the government’s craving for numbers.

A German apprenticeship, typically lasting three years, involves at least one day a-week of classroom teaching and is rigorously assessed. This is replicated by only a few English apprenticeships — Jaguar Land Rover and Rolls Royce for example — but for the rest, there is no sense of ‘elevation’.

Apprenticeships are often stuck in a rut and this exacerbates the harmful public perception that they’re a poor cousin to university degrees.

Employers have spoken to me at length about their desires to create a loyal and skilled workforce, identifying apprenticeships and training as key to this. And, of course, those represented by the AELP – many of whom I look forward to meeting at the conference – are ready and rearing to provide the high quality training that will open the door to a better skilled, brighter Britain.

EXPERT



FE INSIDER
Former House of Commons Education Select Committee specialist Ben Nicholls is head of policy and communications at London’s Newham College. His exclusive column features in *FE Week* on the first Monday of every month.

Looking backwards, looking forwards: policy and possibilities

As I write what my calendar tells me is my last FE Insider of 2013/14, the words ‘what a year it has been’ feel inadequate.

A highly experienced colleague said recently that he’d never known a period quite like the one FE seems to be going through at the moment.

I began this calendar year with an attempted poem criticising the government’s 17.5 per cent cut to education funding rate for 18-year-olds.

While we didn’t ‘win’ that battle in the conventional sense (the government didn’t reverse the cut), mitigation was offered, but more importantly, the sector showed its fighting spirit in a way I hadn’t seen before.

It felt hugely exciting to lots of us — FE colleges rising up together to make their voices heard in new and effective ways — and, if nothing else, it has raised awareness of our fantastic work in the minds of many MPs and other influential figures.

Alongside the damage wreaked by that cut, other money matters have given the sector plenty to think about, from proposals for changing apprenticeship funding to the cull of shorter adult qualifications.

A platform for airing concerns and opinions on such policy issues has been provided by *FE Week* and — as with our response to the 18-year-old cut — this has been of real value. So, in my opinion, has been the steady increase in attention paid to colleges by the Parliamentary select committees.

For the second year running, Ofsted’s chief inspector took his FE and skills director with him to his annual appearance before the Education Committee, where a robust discussion on careers guidance was just one aspect of an interesting session.

Down the corridor the BIS Committee has looked at adult literacy and numeracy, while the MPs charged with scrutinising science,

technology, engineering and maths policy have made science A-levels a key aspect of their programme.

Elsewhere, a plethora of research has been published by representative bodies, campaign groups and others, bringing FE into a much more debated and public place than perhaps before. This can only be a good thing, particularly when our funds are being decimated.

There is still a very long way to go before FE has the attention it needs, particularly from politicians. I was fascinated that during the recent European election campaigns the emotive subject of education barely seemed to come up.

Regardless of our individual feelings about the EU, there’s no denying that British education — including colleges and universities — receive considerable funds from it, and that the EU also facilitates other programmes advantageous to young people, everything from employability projects to orchestras. And yet despite this major contribution — which like everything has its positive and negative sides — education and skills hardly seemed to crop up.

So what happens next? There is an appetite from some politicians at least to explore FE further, and to make some bold and positive statements about our sector.

My challenge to colleges would be to work out what we really want from manifestos and to contribute before it’s too late. *FE Week* and others have got the ball rolling on this, and for starters many of us might be tempted to agree with the 157 Group that the most

useful thing would be a period of calm — a moratorium on policy changes after what feels like a deluge over recent months.

What I’m sure of (and it might not make me popular) is that we’re in no position to whinge if we don’t contribute proactively at this stage.

“Research has been published by representative bodies, campaign groups and others, bringing FE into a much more debated and public place than perhaps before

I am still hopeful that at least one party might have the courage to promise a reversal of the 18-year-old cut which is not only financially damaging, but the one which shows the grossest misunderstanding of what our sector is about.

But whatever we’re after, we should head into party conference territory after the summer sure of our goals, and ready to build on the unity and fighting spirit we found this year to try and make them come true.

The Education and Training Foundation has funded and commissioned The Learning Consortium - a collaboration of providers led by [South Essex College](#) in partnership with [East Durham College](#), [Franklin College](#), [Learning Curve](#), [Walsall College](#) and [Wirral Metropolitan College](#) - to help drive improvement in Teaching & Learning through a remarkable initiative.

The Consortium has been delivering a national programme, tried and tested across a wide range of provider types, which develops a whole organisational approach to improving teaching and learning. The programme is founded on evidence based practice using “The Learning Framework”, an innovative, sector created approach to the development of higher level teaching and learning skills.

Funded and commissioned by

The Education & Training Foundation

“...the programme surpassed our expectations, very interesting and we felt that we are moving in the right direction. We gained clear and positive guidance on how to move forward with our learners and their learning experience.” *Feedback from an Independent Training Provider*

“Very thought provoking and inspiring” *Feedback from an FE College*

Angela O'Donoghue CBE, Principal and Chief Executive of South Essex College highlights a unique element of the initiative: *“this is a programme which has been designed and delivered by the sector for the sector” adding that “with the support of the Foundation, we are delivering a high impact programme at exceptional value for money and are delighted that they have given us the opportunity to share the fantastic skills and expertise of our consortium members to benefit students across the country.”*

The Consortium is hosting a [Teaching and Learning Conference](#) on 24th June at [The British Library Conference Centre](#), London NW1 2DB to showcase examples of effective practice in teaching and learning. With internationally renowned speakers, [Baroness Susan Greenfield](#) and [Professor Stephen Heppell](#) lined up to offer their ground- breaking insights, this is a unique opportunity to enhance your understanding of teaching, learning and assessment and find out more about the Consortium’s work.


Teaching and Learning Conference

24 June, 2014 • Ticket Price: £50 • [Book now](#): <http://tinyurl.com/nsoz6m9>

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EXPERT



CAROL TAYLOR

Deputy chief executive, development and research,
National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (Niace)

Leadership group fulfils ‘specific’ need for female bosses in FE

The workplace remains subject to male dominance and as such, says Carol Taylor, there is need for a space for female leaders to share ideas where they are in the greater number.

More than 100 delegates went to the Women’s Leadership Network (WLN) annual conference, in London, run in partnership with College Leadership Services.

While not aimed solely at women leaders and aspiring leaders, delegates were overwhelmingly female.

Is there a need for a space where women who are in, or who aspire to, leadership can come together? Are there strategies that women need to learn? Are there decisions that women face that men usually don’t face? Is there really a level playing field with no glass ceiling?

It was interesting how the conversations changed over the day — early comments like “I was very annoyed my boss sent me on this....why would I want to go to a leadership conference only for women?” became: “It’s great to have a chance to hear how successful

“
No one can seriously doubt the male hegemony, which leads to men appointing men to posts where leadership qualities are required, thus reinforcing the cycle

women lead”.

The change of atmosphere was palpable as the day went on — women expressing how good it felt to be in the majority, those who began to feel more relaxed about issues such as career choice, managing meetings, handling leadership. It was clear, for example, that [National Union of Students president] Toni Pearce’s excellent session on

lad culture would have had a very different tone with fewer women’s voices.

For me there is a specific need for spaces where aspiring women leaders can come together to share tactics, think about their development needs, and talk to successful women leaders.

No one can seriously doubt the male hegemony, which leads to men appointing men to posts where leadership qualities are required, thus reinforcing the cycle. This is not to say that there aren’t many supportive, open and aware men in senior positions out there, but just to say that there aren’t nearly enough.

While we no longer get interview questions such as “What will you do when the kids are ill?”, women are still subject to subtle ways in which they are either undermined or expected to perform in a certain way.

Take, as a very obvious example, the images used in publications and periodicals, which are overwhelmingly white and male. Take the language used to describe women, ‘bossy’ being one of only a number of gender-specific words used as subtle put-downs.

Delegates at the conference, which took place on May 21, were treated to a keynote from Sophia Swire who, among other things, stood up to drugs warlords, set up more than 250 primary schools in Afghanistan.

Her lively speech took us through how she had used networks, persistence and sheer bloody mindedness to change lives and raise aspirations, especially for girls and women. This set the tone for the rest of the conference, which was — you can do most things if you set your mind to it.

The closing speech of WLN chair Sally Dicketts was forthright and pertinent, developing the theme of role models for young men and women in colleges, at all levels, and about the need for us, men and women, to challenge wherever we need to.

She finished by saying that for her, leadership was about kindness — yes, we had to be tough and forthright, strategic thinkers and responsive managers, but above all, we should be kind.

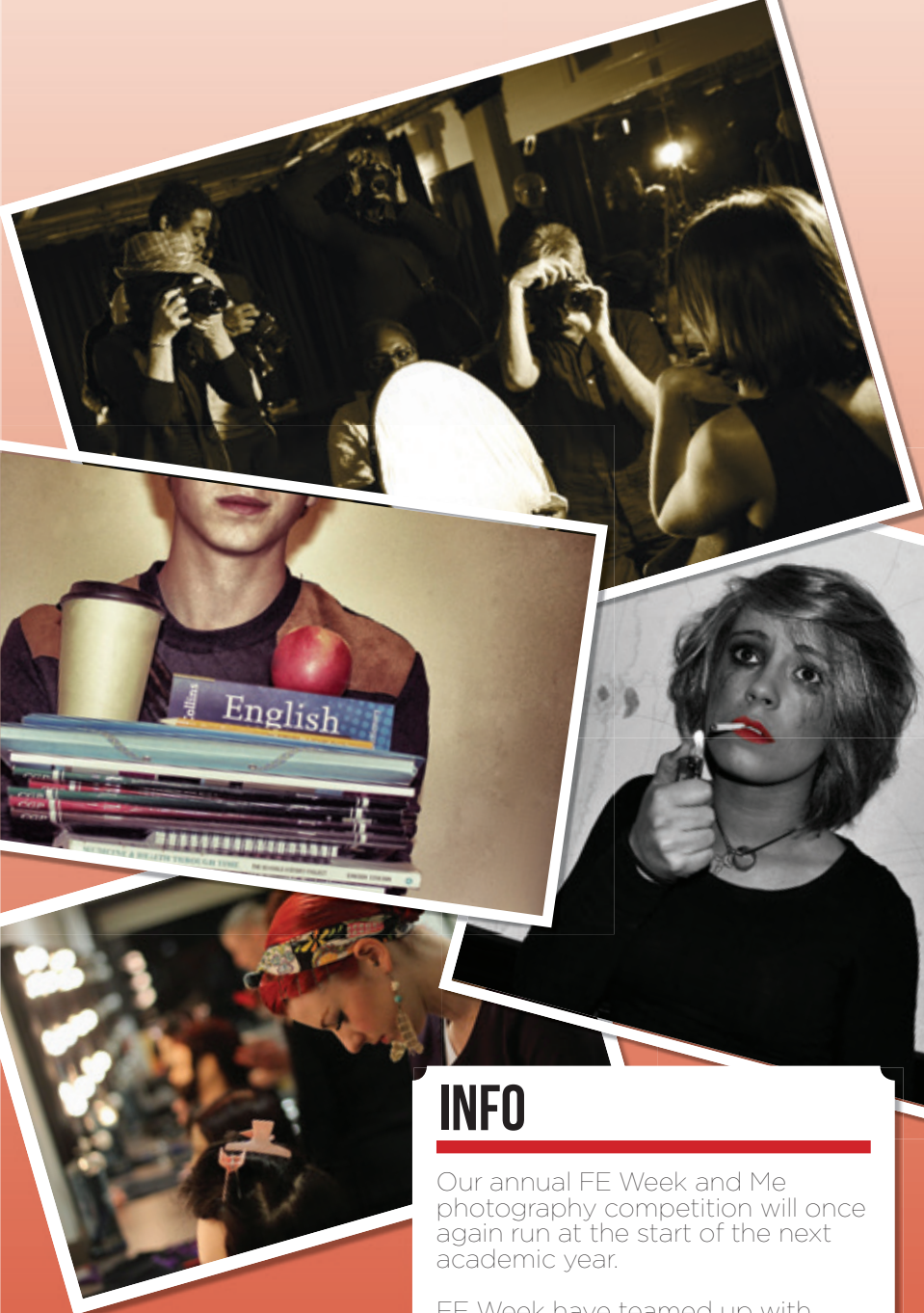
We must have leaders in the FE sector who represent the range of people we work with, the people we want to attract.

We must recognise and value a range of leadership styles. We have to enable women to make choices about whether they want to aim for leadership positions, whether that is as a governor or a chief executive of a charity, whether it’s as a principal of a college or curriculum leader. It’s up to all of us to make this happen, and the thriving WLN is one place where something is being done.

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This year there are two levels of entry: photography student non-photography student

Entrants will be in with a chance of winning some stunning prizes and the chance to shadow a high-profile professional photographer.

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EXPERT



ANDREW MORRIS

Member of the Learning and Skills Research Network (LSRN) planning group and a member of the Policy Consortium

Taking the FE sector forward with new teaching standards

With the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) having recently launched the first new FE teaching standards in seven years, Andrew Morris looks at how they have been received and how they might best be embedded.

It is just as important to create the right conditions for teachers to learn as it is for their students — and new professional standards published by the ETF promise to give us the opportunity to achieve this.

Moreover, the standards should ensure that teachers and their institutions are very much in control of their own destiny.

The standards were launched at the LSRN workshop in London last month. The event brought together teachers, leaders, researchers, unions and the main sector bodies to consider professionalism and the new standards.

Tricia Odell from the ETF explained how the standards were developed in close consultation with the sector and by looking at the way standards operate in other professions.

Three vital areas are covered: values and attributes, knowledge and understanding and professional skills.

The standards are intended to set clear expectations of effective practice and enable teachers and trainers to identify areas for their own professional development as well as to inform teacher education.

The key message from expert discussion groups at the workshop was around creating the right conditions for teachers to learn.

We know that teacher professionalism is best developed through engaging with evidence in a safe and supportive environment.

As Sally Dicketts, chief executive of

Activate Learning, a group of providers in Oxfordshire and Berkshire, put it: “Brain studies tell us it takes 10 years to become an expert, so we need to be kind to one another, to create good emotional environments for teachers to learn in, not fight-or-flight ones.”

Much is left open for organisations to interpret, so it is important that “the whole sector takes ownership of the standards” said John Lea, programme director for post-graduate teaching and learning at Canterbury Christ Church University.

Research evidence shows the importance of collaboration in professional development. It’s not just an individual pursuit; communities of practice in which teachers, trainers and researchers work together to interpret public evidence and engage in systematic enquiries of their own, are proving effective.

Maggie Gregson, director of the Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (SUNCETT) at the University of Sunderland, called for joint practice development — “an approach that takes account of existing practice and balances research evidence with local insight”.

How should providers respond to the new standards? Clear demand from all sides at the launch event was for two things.

First, people throughout the sector must be made aware of the standards and the opportunity they present for creating a sense of professional identity. Second, it is essential the profession takes ownership and control, rather than allowing other powerful forces to act on its behalf.

The workshop called for several parallel efforts to raise awareness of the standards.

A bottom-up approach through practitioner networks and organisations would have the greatest effect. For the speediest response a top-down approach via national representative bodies and leadership teams is required. For the widest take-up a sideways approach works best through peer-to-peer dialogue at the local level. All are needed.

A sector that prides itself on the rich diversity of its provision is well-placed to understand the diversity of evidence needed to support practice.

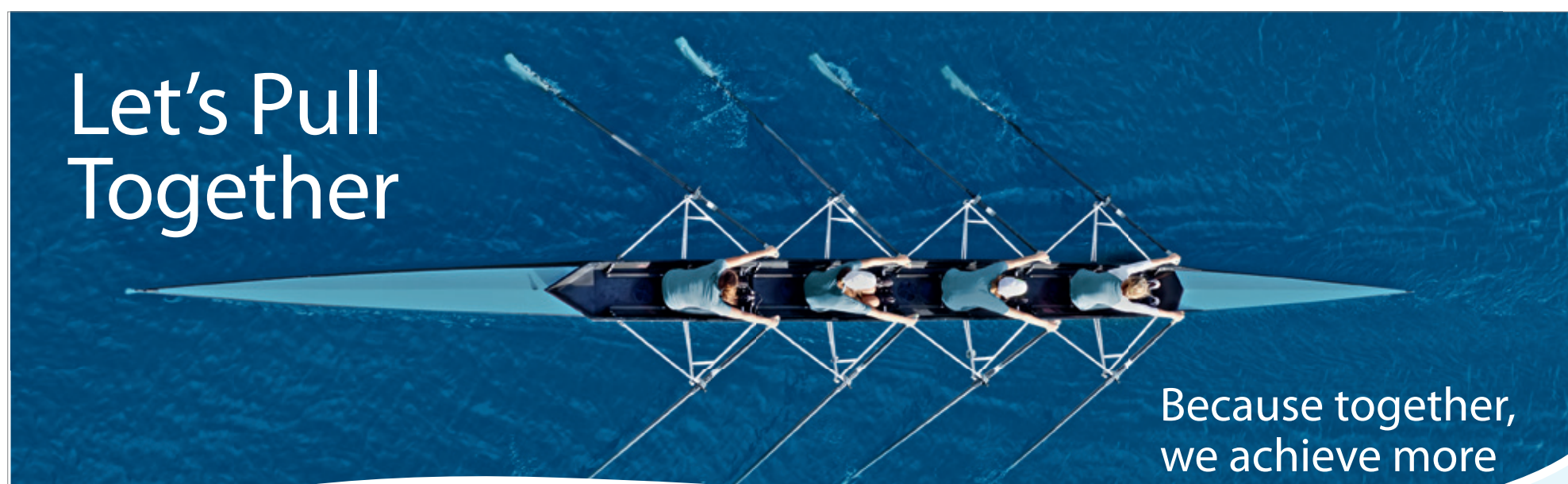
Small-scale studies at classroom level are crucial in adapting teaching approaches for particular learner groups and stimulating innovation.

Qualitative accounts that offer powerful stories and quantitative studies that provide data and track trends are both needed. So too are larger scale studies that attempt to measure effectiveness rigorously across a range of contexts.

The plea from the workshop is for an inclusive approach that galvanises the teachers and trainers, the academics, the unions and professional associations and national organisations in a combined effort to develop a self-determined professional culture in which collaboration and the use of evidence become the norm.

Let this be the rallying point for a sector that shakes off its deference to others and shapes its own concept of professional standards and use of evidence.

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CAMPUS ROUND-UP

Mandy juggles ceramics with TV debut

Having been picked from thousands of applicants to appear on Channel Four show Monty Don's Real Craft, it's clear there's something special about 53-year-old multiple sclerosis (MS) sufferer Mandy Dodd, writes Christy Cooney.

Coursework commitments failed to stop impressive adult learner Mandy Dodd making her television debut last month (May). But putting in time and effort is nothing new for the 53-year-old who, despite her own MS diagnosis a decade ago, cared for her son Matthew, who had Asperger's syndrome, until his death in 2010 at the age of 18. She also looked after her severely disabled mother, Dawn Keating, now aged 92.

Mandy, who has a further son and daughter, made it through from a pool of 7,000 applicants to appear on Channel Four show Monty Don's Real Craft.

It aired on Channel 4 on May 12 having been filmed late last year — while Mandy could have been busy with her Bracknell and Wokingham College coursework.

The show involved making two large and ornate planters under the instruction of Jim Keeling, one of the best potters in the country.

"Jim was able to give me techniques to help me with my disability when I'm working with heavy blocks of clay," Mandy, from Woodley, near Reading, told *FE Week*.

"That project was really a lot of pressure, but I learned the most from that one. I've got my pots in the garden and I'm chuffed to bits.

"The whole team there was so nice and Monty was a real gentlemen."

Mandy's creativity first flourished while at school when she was enlisted to design scenery for a school production. She then designed sets for musical theatre having left school before moving into puppet-making.

But after Mandy was diagnosed with MS, making puppets became increasingly difficult, and when son Matthew died unexpectedly of a chest virus, she gave up the craft overnight.

"My love of art was cast aside", she said. "I also undertook caring for my severely disabled mother after she had three major strokes, until this became too much for me due to my own health issues."

But then a friend recommended a series of ceramics taster sessions at Bracknell and Wokingham College.

"When I attended the first session I was immediately struck by the enthusiasm of Mark Whitaker, the course tutor, for all things clay," she said.

She enrolled on a ceramics A-level at the college, and is now in her second year.

"Working with clay has acted as a therapy for my multiple sclerosis and my grief. At times it has been a lifeline," said Mandy.

Mr Whitaker said: "It has been gratifying to see the progress that Mandy has made over the years. "This is what teaching and adult education is all about, helping people to discover their passions and make positive changes in their own lives."

DO YOU WANT TO BE IN CAMPUS ROUND-UP?
Send your stories with pictures to campus@feweek.co.uk including names, ages and course details of students where applicable

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FEATURED CAMPUS ROUND-UP



Mandy Dodd with one of her bowls. Inset left: Mandy works on a pot

& MOVERS SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who's new and who's leaving

A Somerset sixth form college governors' chair has been made a National Leader of Governance.

Guy Adams was given the two-year role with the National College for Teaching and Leadership, which is an executive agency of the Department for Education, in honour of his work at the Ofsted grade one-rated Richard Huish College.

He has been chair of the college corporation for eight years having also been a student there.

Mr Adams, a solicitor, director of two companies and manager of a property development and letting business, said: "I am looking forward to having the opportunity to improve governance in the schools, colleges and academies, and sharing the outstanding practice that we have developed at the college."

Principal John Abbott said: "It is fantastic for us that we have Guy at

the helm of our corporation and I congratulate him on his achievement. Schools and colleges that work with him in the future will be lucky to benefit from his leadership and experience as we have."

Meanwhile, Bradford College has announced that its new group chief executive will be Andy Welsh.

Chemistry graduate Mr Welsh, who has completed an MBA at the University of Leeds, is currently the Bradford College Group chief operating officer.

He steps up to group chief executive following April's announcement that Basingstoke College of Technology principal Anthony Bravo would be taking up the role.

However, Mr Bravo, who was recently involved in a Twitter row when he retweeted a post in which BBC presenter Jeremy Clarkson was described as a "c***", pulled out of



Guy Adams

the move the following month citing distance and "potential impact on my family" as the reasons for his decision.

Mr Welsh will replace the retiring Michelle Sutton as group chief executive, while Kathryn Oldale will remain as college principal.

And a college spokesperson said Mr Welsh had the "enthusiastic support of the corporation in working with the executive team to build on the excellent reputation of the college and to further develop the performance and profile of the Bradford College Group".



Andy Welsh

Mr Welsh, who began his career in personnel at Leeds City Council before moving to Joseph Priestley College where he rose to HR director and then director of resources, is due to take up the appointment in August this year.

He said: "I am very excited. The college and group both have a fantastic future ahead of them. We all have a part to play in ensuring we maximise our chances of success, so that we confirm our well-earned status of being a leading light and driving force in the sector."

If you want to let us know of any new faces at the top of your college, training provider or awarding organisation please let us know by emailing news@feweek.co.uk



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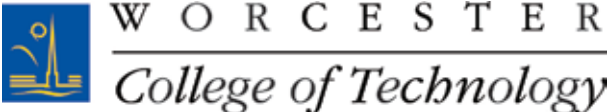
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RSVP: lesoco@morganhunt.com Please leave your name, address, contact details and CV, plus specialism that you would like to work in.



LeSoCo.ac.uk

ASSOCIATE LECTURERS IN ENGLISH/MATHS

£25.04 - £28.39 per class contact hour

We are looking for outstanding candidates to join our multi-award winning College.

As an Associate Lecturer, you will join a committed and professional full and part time teaching team from a variety of backgrounds who work together to teach across a wide range of curriculum courses and levels. As a qualified and experienced lecturer of Functional English, Functional Maths, GCSE English and/or GCSE Maths, you will further complement our Skills for Life Section. Teaching will be from Entry level to Level 2 and for learners on programmes ranging from sport, health and social care, equine, agriculture, childcare, computing, arboriculture, animal care, business, music and performing arts, construction, engineering and many more subjects.

Teaching experience, a teaching qualification and excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to inspire, motivate and engage learners is essential. Part time hours are available at one or more of our College Centres in Bridgwater, Cannington, Yeovil, Bath, Paignton and/or Bristol.

Closing date: **12 Noon Tuesday 10 June 2014**

Interview date: **Wednesday 18 June 2014**

For further information visit

www.bridgwater.ac.uk

or telephone **01278 441221**



TEACHER OF GCSE ENGLISH AND/OR MEDIA

Salary: £21,469-31,422 plus PSP if appropriate

We are looking to appoint a full-time Teacher of GCSE English and/or Media.

We are seeking an outstanding teacher who is flexible and innovative in their approach. The successful candidate will demonstrate their ability to make a committed contribution to students, ensuring that they fulfil their potential and progress to their chosen destination.

The college has a popular Level 2 programme of study which enables students to gain extra qualifications at GCSE before progressing on to Level 3 after just one year. The successful candidate will contribute to the delivery of Level 2 English, and/or AS/A2 Media.

An excellent communicator, the appointed candidate must have a commitment to delivering exceptional outcomes for learners and to wider college values, including our aim to become an Outstanding college.

Apply now: www.stocktonsfc.ac.uk/vacancies-p16

Closing date: **12noon, Friday 6th June 2014**

Interviews: **w/c Monday 9th June 2014**

Start date: **21st August 2014**



www.stocktonsfc.ac.uk/vacancies-p16



BASINGSTOKE
COLLEGE OF
TECHNOLOGY

New Teacher - Mathematics

£19,633.83 to £25,291.91 per annum + £4,000 Golden Hello**
**conditions apply

Basingstoke College of Technology is a vibrant college in north Hampshire, proud of our excellent employer links and student progression rates. We are currently recruiting for a talented Mathematician to join our team to teach in our GCSE and A 'level Maths programmes across the college from September 2014.

This post would be suitable for a new graduate, or someone already working, who is seeking a career in teaching. Full support and training will be provided. Government bursaries may be available for suitable candidates.

Essential qualifications for the role:

- Degree in mathematics or other relevant subject.

If you have the dedication, drive and commitment to enthuse learners and staff then we would like to hear from you.

BCoT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its learners, and expects all staff to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be required to undertake appropriate checks, including an enhanced DBS disclosure as well as providing proof of right to work in the UK. BCoT is an equal opportunities employer and we welcome enquiries from everyone and value diversity in our workforce.

Applications will be reviewed on an on-going basis and an appointment made as soon as a suitable candidate is identified.

To apply for this post, please click on the link below:-
www.bcot.ac.uk/mathsggraduate

If you wish to send a CV with your application, please remember to click 'upload' after attaching it, otherwise your CV will not be sent to us.



LECTURER – CORE SKILLS, ENGLISH OR MATHS

£24,418 - £28,286 Maths attracts an additional market rate allowance of £2040 p/a)

We are on a journey to being **Outstanding**. We need motivated and professional individuals who are **dynamic, inspirational, and innovative** to join us on that journey.

If you are looking for a new challenge and would like to utilise your skills and knowledge whilst developing your own career, this opportunity will be rewarding and fulfilling. In this role you will teach young people (16-19yrs) English or Maths, which will enable them to fulfil their career aspirations and empower them to embark on working life.

If you have the qualities to deliver innovative and creative teaching for GCSE (and related English and Maths qualifications) to a variety of learning levels, then we will welcome your application. This is an ideal opportunity for new graduates to develop a career in the Further Education sector, but we are also seeking applications from experienced teachers who will bring knowledge of delivering these subjects to a high standard. A degree in a subject related to your chosen discipline is essential, as is a minimum of Level 2 in English/Maths and IT.

If you have exceptional communication skills and the ability to prioritise and coordinate a challenging workload, this may be the right role for you. You will be a self starter, who can quickly develop a good rapport with young people.

The College offers many good employment benefits including generous holiday entitlement, pension scheme, and many on-site benefits and facilities. This position will be based at our Peterborough Park Crescent site.

To find out more about teaching at Peterborough Regional College, and to apply visit:
www.peterborough.ac.uk vacancy reference **99827**

www.peterborough.ac.uk

The College
of West Anglia



WE ARE LOOKING FOR

TEMPORARY LECTURER IN ENGLISH – BASED AT MILTON CAMPUS, CAMBRIDGE

Salary: £11,903 - £16,438
Post Ref: 505012
Hours: 18.5 per week

LECTURER IN ENGLISH – BASED AT KING'S LYNN CAMPUS

Salary: £14,476 - £19,992
Post Ref: 564008
Hours: 22.5 per week

0.5 LECTURER IN ESOL – BASED AT ISLE CAMPUS, WISBECH

Salary: £11,903 - £16,438
Post Ref: 564026
Hours: 18.5 per week

0.5 ESOL CO-ORDINATOR – BASED AT ISLE CAMPUS, WISBECH

Salary: £11903 - £16,438
Post Ref: 528001
Hours: 18.5 per week

PLEASE NOTE:-
THE ESOL LECTURER AND ESOL CO-ORDINATOR CAN BE PUT TOGETHER TO MAKE A FULL TIME POSITION

0.5 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATOR – BASED AT KING'S LYNN CAMPUS

Salary: £16480
Post Ref: 564038
Hours: 18.5 per week

For the full Job Descriptions and Person Specifications, you can view all our vacancies on www.cwa.ac.uk and apply on-line

Closing date for receipt of all applications: **12 noon, Friday 13 June 2014**

www.cwa.ac.uk

Let's Pull Together

Because together,
we achieve more

OCR is ahead of the game. As a Cambridge Assessment exam board, part of the University of Cambridge, our vocational range of qualifications are developed with employers and educators. They are proven to support people's education, raising their confidence and aspirations.

There is no one better qualified to help educators enhance their learners' ability to make informed decisions, to allow them to sustain a job and be responsible citizens.

Achieve more with Oxford, Cambridge and RSA.

Headline sponsor.

Quality Vocational Qualifications, Cambridge Style



See ocr.org.uk/vocational to empower learners for employment and life.

OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

FE Week Sudoku challenge

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

		8				3		
			3	6	9			
9	3	7		1	2	4		
4		9		8		5		
	6				7			
7		4		6		8		
8	5	1		7	9	2		
		8	5	2				
	4				5			

Difficulty:
EASY

6	3		4				1	
			6		8	4		
4				9	1			
						1	6	
7								8
	4	2						
			8	7				2
		8	3		2			
7				5		8	4	

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

Last Week's solutions

4	7	9	3	6	1	5	8	2
5	6	2	4	9	8	1	7	3
8	1	3	2	5	7	9	6	4
3	8	7	1	2	4	6	5	9
6	5	1	9	7	3	2	4	8
9	2	4	6	8	5	7	3	1
7	3	6	8	1	9	4	2	5
1	4	5	7	3	2	8	9	6
2	9	8	5	4	6	3	1	7

Difficulty:
EASY

9	5	7	4	3	2	8	1	6
2	6	4	1	5	8	7	9	3
3	1	8	6	9	7	4	5	2
6	8	2	3	7	5	9	4	1
1	9	5	8	4	6	2	3	7
4	7	3	2	1	9	5	6	8
5	3	6	7	2	4	1	8	9
8	2	9	5	6	1	3	7	4
7	4	1	9	8	3	6	2	5

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Spot the difference to WIN a retro FE Week mug!



Spot **five** differences. First correct entry wins a retro FE Week mug. Text your name and picture of your completed spot the difference to 07969 166 374.

The spot the difference winner for edition 103 was Croydon College marketing co-ordinator Emma Mendonca (pictured).

